
GETAC Recap

The Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) met Friday, February 8, 2008, in Austin and unanimously approved minutes from the November 19, 2007, meeting.

Chair Edward Racht, MD, requested a moment of silence to honor three people killed in a Valley AirCare helicopter wreck. He also discussed the GETAC retreat including refocusing the strategic plan for the Texas EMS and Trauma Systems; reviewing the EMS and Trauma Regulatory Structure Task Force survey report; and a possible restructure of the GETAC formation to present to stakeholders.

Kathryn C. Perkins, assistant commissioner for the Division for Regulatory Services, reported DSHS is working on creating a strategic plan for the agency that addresses the state's population growth and a plan for the next legislative session. Ms. Perkins announced Adolfo Valadez, MD, MPH, has been chosen assistant commissioner for the Division of Prevention and Preparedness Services. Perkins has been working with Valadez and Commissioner David Lakey to ensure emergency preparedness advisory groups formed since 2005 work effectively with the DSHS Preparedness Coordination Council. Ms. Perkins said rules 157.11 (Provider; includes rules for "gurney car" and "epi pen"), 157.38 (Continuing Education), and 157.44 (Instructor) have been accepted for proposal in the *Texas Register*. The red light camera bill funds are still not appropriated, but rules will be taken to the DSHS Council in April

of 2008.

Steve Janda, director of the Office of EMS and Trauma Systems Coordination, reported approximately \$51.7 million of the 3588 monies will be disbursed in late March. Any funds accumulated between \$51.7 and \$98 million are not appropriated. Funds collected above \$98 million can be disbursed but require executive approval. DSHS is ready to ask for that approval if necessary. Janda reported the Stroke Committee asked that GETAC's discussion of 157.1, *Requirements for a Stroke Facility Designation*, be postponed until the May GETAC meeting.

Casey Blass, director of the Disease Prevention and Invention Section, is working with stakeholders to improve the Trauma Registry. DSHS remains open to all options, including outsourcing. The Registry has secured funding from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for one year and is working on funding for the following year; contracting with Texas EMS, Trauma, and Acute Care Foundation (TETAF) to survey stakeholders concerning what they want to see in a Registry. A new registry is considered the best idea with the goal of outsourcing by summer and developing a contract by the end of the year. The Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council has made EMS and Trauma registries their top priorities and have created a "legislative action team," headed by Paula Yuma from Dell Children's Medical Center of Austin.

Air Medical Committee – Chair Shirley Scholz, RN, reported the committee continues work on air medical programs' rules, as well as the draft document concerning alternative state survey

process program criteria to serve as a substitute for Commission on Accreditation of Air Medical Services (CAMTS) standards for air ambulance licensing.

EMS Committee – Vice Chair Dudley Wait, EMT-P, conducted the meeting in the absence of Chair Pete Wolf, EMT-P. Committee members' absence prevented a quorum. The committee discussion included the Houston/Galveston Area Council (HGAC) Work Commission recent cutting of EMS from list of programs eligible for funding; concerns about exposure diseases; a summary of the January 11, 2008, Education Committee workgroup held; information on TxDOT grants for rural EMS classes; and Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) Leadership Academy program.

Education Committee – Chair Jodie Harbert, LP, reported on the committee meeting on January 11, 2008. The committee discussed the Stroke System of Care study awarding Continuing Education (CE) credits; and simulation training in lieu of clinicals. The committee drafted a letter to DSHS requesting background checks for all applicants and one to the Houston/Galveston Area Council (HGAC) Work Commission regarding cutting scholarships for EMS programs. Committee members developed an EMS educators survey to be distributed in May 2008. The committee plans to have a national accreditation program by the year 2013, but funding continues to be an issue. A workgroup meeting is tentatively planned for either April 4th or April 11th in Dallas.

Injury Prevention Committee – In the absence of chair Gary Kesling, committee member Rick Moore reported the

committee discussed having an Injury Prevention booth at the EMS Conference in Fort Worth in November; the upcoming submissions deadline for *Texas EMS Magazine*; and indexing the articles in *Texas EMS Magazine*. During the general public comment Sean Carter, and his mother Jenny Carter, spoke about his life as a traumatic brain injury survivor. The committee will request data from the Trauma Registry reporting the top five traumatic causes of death, disability, and costliest occurrences to use in developing future statewide prevention projects. The committee voted to support the 157.32 (red light camera) rule as written by the Trauma Systems Committee. The Data Informatics and Research Task Force (DIRT) did not meet.

Medical Directors Committee – Chair Steve Ellerbe, DO, reported the committee altered standards of care during a disaster and liability for medical directors. The committee discussed developing a standardized system to assist in surveying and treating exposures of infectious disease to public safety personnel.

Pediatric Committee – Chair Joan Shook, MD, reported the committee discussed the Trauma Registry and suggested a commercial product compatible with the programs used by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) in hospitals. Other discussion included the Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) National Resource Center survey results and the grant funding set by EMSC projects. A work group and the Texas Pediatrics Society will discuss EMSC projects. The committee also identified an emergency preparedness product to promote interface between EMS and

school districts.

Stroke Committee – In the absence of chair Neal Rutledge, MD, Mike Click, RN, reported the committee reviewed the draft DSHS rule 157.133, *Requirements for a Stroke Facility Designation* and recommended the rule be deferred until the EMS training program subcommittee, DSHS stroke facility subcommittee, and transport plan subcommittee review it and provide input. The tentatively scheduled workgroup meeting to modify this draft will take place April 12, 2008. The committee recommended the draft rule be removed from the GETAC agenda until further notice.

Trauma Systems Committee – Chair Ronald Stewart, MD, reported the committee discussed the DSHS rule 157.132, *Regional Trauma Account*, regarding fund disbursement from traffic signal enforcement and approved the draft language with the exception of eliminating the section that allowed for an alternate hospital allocation formula. The Committee also decided against supporting the Comprehensive Advance Life Support (CALS) program in lieu of the Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC) required for trauma center nurses.

Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Task Force – Eric Epley, EMT-P, reported the task force's next meeting is March 25, 2008, 1 to 5 p.m. and March 26, 2008, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Texas Hospital Association (THA) in Austin. The Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Task Force also has arranged to meet periodically with a task force from the Governor's Division of Emergency Management. A sub-group of the task force will work with the Texas Engineering

Extension Service (TEEX) on a curriculum for an Ambulance Strike Force Team Leadership courses, for which DSHS has budgeted \$30,000 for training of the task force. Other topics covered were: the Pediatrics Committee "white paper"; consolidating the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA); the State Clinical Advisory Board; and liability relief for altered standards of care.

EMS and Trauma Regulatory Task Force – The committee has completed its charge and did not give a report.

DSHS Preparedness Coordination Council – No report was made available.

Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council – Todd Maxson, MD, reported the council is seeking permanent funding for the Trauma Registry and the Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation program. A free DVD was produced which provides educational information and resources regarding traumatic brain injuries. The council discussed creating a position paper on pediatric hospitals not associated with medical centers that could be designated as Level I trauma facilities if these centers met the ACS rules.

Texas EMS, Trauma, and Acute Care Foundation (TETAF)

Jorie Klein, RN, reported the foundation is planning to hire staff, review bylaws and create a strategic plan for the Trauma Registry. Klein would like to create a workgroup to survey health care entities for feedback on solutions for the Trauma Registry. The foundation reported the addition of two new foundation divisions: a pediatrics division and a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) division.

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The foundation has finalized a trauma designation process for Level III facilities to begin within the next two weeks. Foundation representatives reported on projects including: the Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP); rules of division and standardizing criteria the state will accept; stroke criteria; and the need for more physician participation.

General Public Comment:

Public comments were made by several stakeholders regarding the PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Racht concerning the possible reconstruction of GETAC. (www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/GETACCouncil.shtm) The suggested restructuring aims to improve the council by: providing more flexibility to combine meetings; allot more public comment time and committee discussion; provide better representation; and ease travel arrangements. The restructuring may be voted on at the next GETAC meeting. Other comments included reducing Office of EMS/Trauma Systems reports from the meetings; changing the name of the segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) subcommittee to include other cardiac care professions; possibly contracting with TETAF for administrative duties of subcommittees. It was announced that F.E. Shaheen, III, EMT-P, had resigned from GETAC.

Action Items:

A motion by Jodie Harbert for the recommendation of a letter to Assistant Commissioner Kathryn C. Perkins requesting background checks on all EMS applicants.

A friendly amendment by Jodie

Harbert specifically asks for federal background checks and specifies types of applicants this should apply to. This revised motion was made by Jodie Harbert and seconded by Luis Fernandez, MD, to recommend a letter to Perkins to request DSHS do federal background checks on all recertification; all reciprocity certification licensure; and all EMS personnel for all EMS applicants. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion by Ronald Stewart, MD, and seconded by Mike Click, RN, to approve and move forward with draft DSHS rule: Section 157.132-Regional Trauma Account, regarding funds disbursement from traffic signal enforcement; as amended in Section (d) Calculation Methods, (1)Hospital Allocation, (E); by the Trauma Systems Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion by Jodie Harbert and seconded by Tivy Whitlock to approve a letter to be sent to Barbara Murphy, who is the coordinator for planning and evaluation for the Houston-Galveston Area Council in support of EMS and in support of meeting with the group to help them make a more informed decision on the funding of EMS education. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Racht asked for the permission of the council to call Ms. Murphy of H-GAC to discuss the issue from the previous motion on behalf GETAC and all stakeholders. Mr. Harbert suggested a conference call with Ms. Murphy that should include members of the EMS Committee and Education Committee. The council accepted the suggestion and accepted the request.

A motion was made by Luis Fernandez, MD, and seconded by Mike Click, RN, to develop an

infectious disease exposure response workgroup for first responders as recommended by the Medical Directors Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Luis Fernandez, MD, and seconded by Ronald Stewart, MD, for the GETAC chair to draft a letter to be sent to the Governor's Office and to the Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services that would reflect the recommendation of the Trauma Regulatory Structure Task Force Report to improve the function of EMS and Trauma Systems inside the Department of State Health Services. The motion passed unanimously.

Future meeting dates in

2008: May 7-9, 2008, in Austin; August 13-15, 2008, in Austin; and November 22-24 in Fort Worth, Texas in conjunction with the 2008 EMS Conference.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

**Join us for the
Texas EMS
Conference
November 23-26
in
Fort Worth**

